



FRESH
CONVERSATIONS

**IMPLEMENTATION
GUIDE**

October 2021





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The Fresh Conversations Implementation Guide is intended for agencies and organizations in starting and maintaining the **Fresh Conversations** program. This guide was developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity. This guide may be used to implement **Fresh Conversations** in Iowa or any other state.

Fresh Conversations is an evidence based research tested program within the [SNAP-Ed Toolkit](#). It is recommended that the program be implemented in accordance to the evidence based standards but not required.





BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*This section includes the history of **Fresh Conversations**, the Theoretical Constructs the program is based on, and the Program Evidence Base.*



Introduction to Fresh Conversations

Fresh Conversations is a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) program created by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) within the Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity to help low-income older adults stay independent, and to promote healthy eating and active living. **Fresh Conversations** targets behaviors known to reduce chronic disease burden and promote healthy aging. It is designed to promote healthier food and beverage choices across food groups to move closer to Dietary Guidelines for Americans (eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, healthy fats—less sodium and added sugars), as well as support functional and active aging by promoting affordable and accessible physical activity strategies guided by the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans older adult recommendations.

Fresh Conversations is a direct education intervention where participants are actively engaged in the learning process with a Facilitator and/or interactive media. Each monthly meeting is designed to be interactive with a group discussion, goal setting, physical activity break, and recipe tasting. Each meeting is led by a trained Facilitator. Participants receive a newsletter that are written based on recent topics and evidence-based research around nutrition and physical activity. Facilitators use a companion guide to the newsletter with behavioral objectives, a short summary of the previous month's newsletter, key themes from the current newsletter, a discussion on physical activity, an opportunity to set a goal or action step and a recipe tasting.

Target Audience: **Fresh Conversations** targets low-income and underserved SNAP recipients or SNAP-eligible community-residing adults ages 60 years and older.

Fresh Conversations Program Goals

1. Improve healthy eating and nutritional risk, and encourage less sedentary time among older adults.
2. Deliver age-appropriate, interactive, science-based, educational materials and experiences that are relevant to healthy aging.

History of Fresh Conversations

Fresh Conversations was originally a program called Chef Charles. The program was a once a month newsletter-based group nutrition education program offered through the congregate nutrition program (aka senior lunch program) and focused on fruit, vegetable, and calcium-rich food consumption; physical activity; safe food handling practices, and food security. The program was delivered in a didactic style, with minimal group discussion.

In 2011 a pilot study determined that Chef Charles participants had greater positive changes in nutrition risk when the program used a facilitative, theory-based approach. This study served as the foundation for creating **Fresh Conversations**. The following year, focus groups with older adult participants confirmed that the program delivery style needed to be more facilitative, and also revealed that the program name needed to be changed and program Facilitators needed more comprehensive training. In response, the **Fresh Conversations** program was created in 2014.

2011-2012

Pilot Study and Formative Evaluation

Pilot study showed participants of Chef Charles had greater changes in nutrition risk and dietary intake than a control group. These results and the formative evaluation to follow led to **Fresh Conversations**.

2015

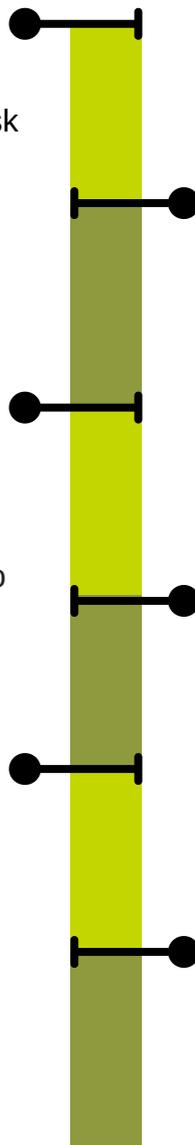
Evidence Base

An Impact study found that **Fresh Conversations** participants that attended four or more meetings had greater improvements in nutritional risk than a control group. These findings contributed to **Fresh Conversations** being accepted into the SNAP-Ed toolkit in 2019.

2018

Program Satisfaction

A participant survey found overall program satisfaction was high with total satisfaction being 71.2+/-9.7 out of 80. About two-thirds of participants agreed or strongly agreed that **Fresh Conversations** helped them improve their healthy eating.



2014

Establishing a Theoretical Base

Fresh Conversations was created as the result. The program is rooted in the Social Marketing Theory. Materials are based on the Health Belief Model and constructs are assessed for each new newsletter and guide.

2017

Ensuring Fidelity

Training of facilitators moved from a centralized model to individual or small group trainings conducted by numerous program coordinators. In response, a fidelity assessment protocol and materials were created, tested and validated.

2020

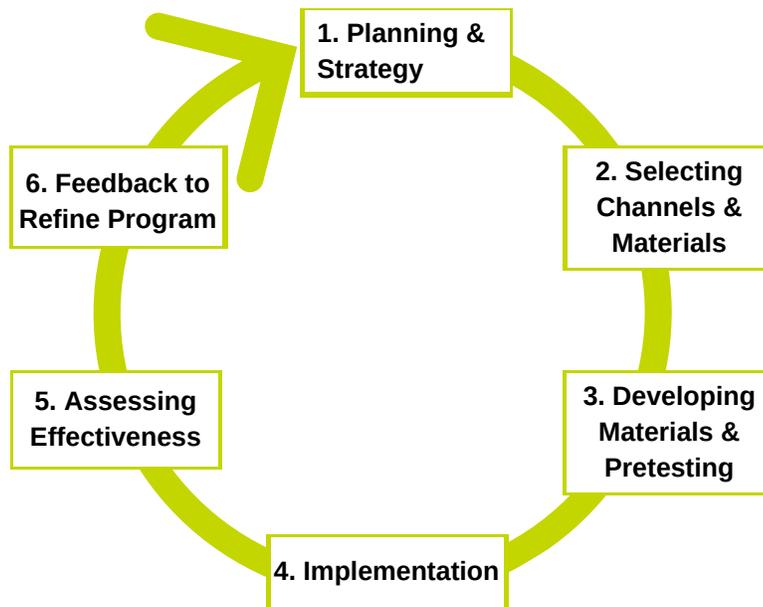
Piloting Virtual

Due to COVID-19 the program moved to a virtual format. A pilot study was conducted to measure differences in non-in person delivery modes and satisfaction of a virtual model.

Theoretical Constructs

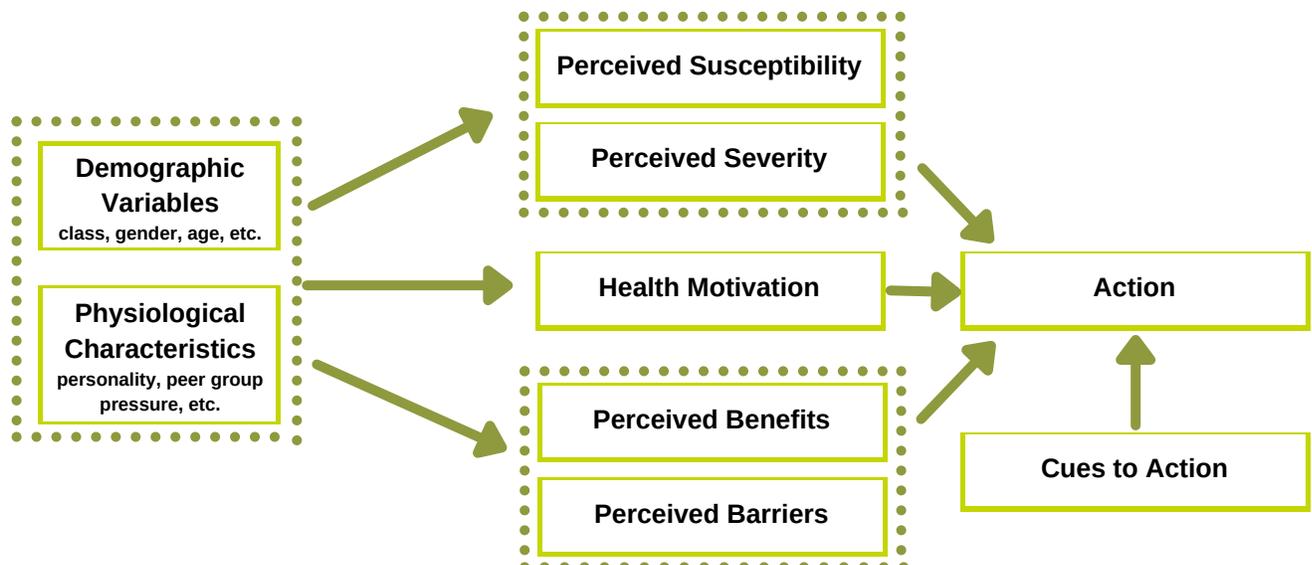
Social Marketing Theory

The **Fresh Conversations** program was developed using the Social Marketing Theory (SMT). The SMT is a program planning model that applies marketing principles toward public health programs and is effective in designing impactful nutrition programs for older adults. The SMT is made up of six steps. The key tenant to the SMT is that the target audience is involved throughout the development process.



Health Belief Model

The behavior change model that guides **Fresh Conversations** materials is the Health Belief Model (HBM). The HBM suggests individual readiness to act and self-efficacy is influenced by perceived risk and susceptibility toward a particular outcome, and the perceived benefits and barriers to taking actions. Each **Fresh Conversations** newsletter and accompanying guide are written to collectively include all constructs of the HBM model.



Theoretical Construct Reviews

The monthly materials (i.e., newsletter and Facilitator guide) are independently reviewed to ensure they address all of the HBM constructs of perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, perceived barriers, perceived benefits, cues to action, and self-efficacy.

It is important to note that during this review process, it is not expected or required that each article addresses every HBM construct. Rather, collectively each newsletter and Facilitator guide address every HBM construct. This is why revising and/or removing content from the **Fresh Conversations** materials may make the newsletter non-compliant with the HBM construct review.

Principles of Influence

During the development phase of **Fresh Conversations**, it was determined that this newsletter was to be written in a similar style to a popular press magazine. While the content is research-based, it is not written in a technical way. The messaging used in program materials incorporates the Principles of Persuasion, which suggests that it is advantageous to use six core principles to decision making (reciprocity, scarcity, authority, commitment and consistency, liking, and consensus [social proof]) to persuade others to take specific actions.



Program Evidence Base

Fresh Conversations is a research tested evidence-based SNAP-Ed direct education, newsletter-based intervention for older adults. In 2015, an impact study was conducted with 761 older adults; 355 participants completed all pre, mid and post questionnaires over a nine- month period. The study utilized a control and treatment group design. Questionnaires used the Dietary Screening Tool (DST), The Healthy Eating Self-Efficacy Scale (HESES), and included questions to assess beliefs or expectations towards the benefits of regular exercise. The study found that the mean nutritional risk (DST score) for those in the treatment group who attended four or more **Fresh Conversations** meetings was significantly higher than the control group. Based on these findings and other favorable outcomes of the program (participant satisfaction), **Fresh Conversations** was submitted and approved for the SNAP-Ed toolkit in 2019 as a research tested evidence-based program for other agencies to adopt.



Fresh Conversation's evidence-base was determined based on in-person, face-to-face implementation. In 2020, the program began utilizing a virtual delivery model in response to the global pandemic. This delivery model has not been tested for evidence, but was evaluated over a four month pilot period and showed positive outcomes (limited technical difficulties, high satisfaction, high intention to make a change) from both meeting Facilitators and participants.



The Iowa Department of Public Health regularly evaluates the **Fresh Conversations** program in Iowa. For more information or if interested in accessing evaluation tools or collaborating on multi-agency evaluations, please contact the IDPH SNAP-Ed Evaluator.



PROGRAM MATERIALS

*This section includes information about the **Fresh Conversations** newsletter, guide, and the material use guidelines.*

Newsletter

Each participant receives a four-page newsletter that reiterates the information provided at the meeting. The newsletters are written based on recent topics and evidence-based research around nutrition and physical activity. Sources are provided in the newsletter.

The newsletter includes 3-5 articles related to the overarching topic or theme. Information is often presented in tables or graphics. Puzzles and games in the newsletter reinforce the educational content of each newsletter. The recipe provided in the newsletter is the first (preferred) tasting option in the Facilitator guide. The newsletter provides a take action section, where participants are encouraged to write their goal or action step to work towards.

Pictures in the newsletter are bright and colorful and often provide examples or ideas for participants related to the content of the newsletter.

Other topics such as food safety, food security, physical activity and conditions related to aging are often addressed or integrated within the newsletter through articles or call outs.

FRESH CONVERSATIONS

Iowa Department of Public Health | Volume 8, Issue 7



Paint your plate with COLOR!

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 recommends 2-3 cups of vegetables and 1 1/2 cup - 2 cups of fruit per day.

Have you ever heard the phrase "eat the colors of the rainbow?" And no, not the famous candy. We all know fruits and vegetables are a healthy part of our diet but let's go even deeper. Among all of the other good things, colorful fruits and vegetables contain something called phytonutrients. These nutrients have potential effects that protect against cancer and heart disease. They also act as antioxidants in your body, a word you may be a little more familiar with.

MyPlate was created by the USDA to help Americans visualize what their plates should look like at meals. MyPlate recommends that half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables.

Many studies have linked a higher intake of phytonutrient-rich fruits and vegetables with a lower incidence of cancer. Carotenoids found in many orange colored fruits and vegetables has been linked with a lower incidence of breast cancer.

With an increased focus on fruits and vegetables, often comes a decrease in high calorie and high fat foods. Bonus - eating less saturated fats has been shown to reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease. Your heart will love this!

In addition, eating a varied diet of different colored fruits and vegetables is important to help you scoop up as many phytonutrients as possible. So what if you don't like beets or cranberries? The best part, you can choose another red fruit or vegetable to get similar phytonutrients. Eating the colors of the rainbow takes on a whole new meaning!



Head to MyPlate.gov to learn more ways to incorporate fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables in your diet!

Source: https://www.breastcancer.org/tips/nutrition/reduce_risk/foods/phytochem
Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/phytonutrients-paint-your-plate-with-the-colors-of-the-rainbow-2019042516501>
Source: <https://www.bjrp.org/content/phytochemicals-cancer-prevention-and-management>

Where can I find the phytonutrients?

Red	Strawberries, Cranberries, Raspberries, Tomatoes, Cherries, Apples, Beets, Watermelon, Grapes, Red Peppers, Red Onions
Orange & Yellow	Carrots, Sweet Potatoes, Peppers, Oranges, Pineapple, Tangerine, Mango, Pumpkin, Apricots, Peaches, Corn, Cantaloupe
Green	Spinach, Avocado, Asparagus, Artichokes, Broccoli, Kale, Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts, Kiwi, Green Herbs, Alfalfa Sprouts
Blue & Purple	Blueberries, Blackberries, Elderberries, Raisins, Eggplant, Plums, Figs, Prunes, Purple Cabbage
White & Brown	Cauliflower, Onions, Garlic, Leeks, Mushrooms, Parsnips

Source: <https://health.mo.gov/living/families/wic/pdf/phytonutrientsposter.pdf> Source: <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/what-you-need-know-about-dietary-supplements>

Get more fruits and veggies in your diet: Tips and Tricks!

1. Think in twos: Try to get 2 servings in the morning, 2 servings in the afternoon, and 2 at night.
2. Snacks, Snacks, Snacks! Try a piece of fruit or some sliced vegetables for a snack on the go.
3. Look for colors on the restaurant menu. Start with a cup of soup or a salad. Or see if you can add a side of vegetables to your meal. Try fresh fruit for dessert.
4. Shop local! Check out your local farmer's markets, or community supported farms. You may find some new produce to try!
5. Frozen produce can be a great alternative. When certain produce is not in season, frozen fruits and vegetables count and can be just as nutritious!
6. Add vegetables into your spaghetti sauce, smoothies, eggs, potatoes, or rice.
7. Think about your breakfast - add bananas, raisins, or berries to your cereal.

Should I take a supplement?
There is no easy substitute to eating fruits and vegetables. Supplements are not absorbed as readily as nutrients from food. There is a risk of toxicity of antioxidant supplements in large doses as well. Always talk with your doctor before beginning any supplements. FDA is not authorized to review dietary supplement products for safety and effectiveness before they are marketed.

How can I get my produce to last longer?

- Buy fruits and vegetables at different stages of ripeness and eat it as it ripens.
- Keep fruit where you will see it and remember to eat it!
- Don't wash vegetables until they are ready to use, they will stay fresh longer.
- Choose fresh produce that keeps well for a week or more: beets, cabbage, carrots, celery, kale, potatoes, apples, winter squash or oranges.
- Buy fruits and vegetables when they are in season, they will be cheaper and most flavorful at those times. You can even freeze most fruits and vegetables that you didn't get used!

Source: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/antioxidants/>

Fresh Conversations is developed by: Iowa Dept. of Public Health iowa.gov/inn
Iowa Dept. on Aging iowaaging.gov



Facilitator's Guide

Volume 8, Issue 7



Paint your plate with color!

Background Information (optional):

- [Harvard Health: Phytonutrients](#)
- [Maximizing Nutrients and Phytonutrients](#)
- [UnityPoint Make Your Plate Colorful](#)
- [Phytonutrient Graphic](#)
- [Nutrition.gov - Phytonutrients](#)
- [Fruitsandveggies.org "What are Phytonutrients?"](#)
- [What you need to know about Dietary Supplements](#)

Behavior Goals

1. Participants will understand the link between decreased chronic disease risk and phytonutrient-rich fruit and vegetable intakes.
2. Participants will understand the importance of strength training and ways to incorporate it into their workout.
3. Participants will be able to voice two ways to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Meeting Preparation:

1. Review the newsletter. Send questions or concerns to your coordinator.
2. Review the background resources (website links are provided above).
3. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful hints for the group. If virtual, have ideas on what to share about the recipe you tried.
4. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.

Continued on page 2

The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the facilitator directions are in ***bold, dark red italic***. It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

1

Meeting Preparation:

5. If the meeting is virtual, prepare ideas for how to engage participants in the recipe making process.
 - a. Prepare a grocery list for the recipe chosen that can be sent with newsletter for participants to purchase
 - b. Demonstrate recipe on video and direct participants to the recipe in the newsletter.
 - c. If conference call: create a conversation about the recipe: serving size, freezing instructions, tips, discussion on ingredients, nutrition etc.

Props:

1. Paper and Pen for participants
2. Picture of MyPlate
3. Optional: 1 cup serving container, fruit and vegetables to display 1 cup servings

Conversation

Welcome to Fresh Conversations! At our last meeting, we talked about cooking for a smaller household and some of the ways to increase your efficiency in the kitchen. Did anyone find a recipe online or in your cookbook that you divided to make smaller?

Facilitator can share an example of a recipe that you made less servings of.

How about any planned-overs that you repurposed into a different meal?

Facilitators allow time for participants to share any meals that they used the leftovers for a different meal. Maybe using extra taco meat for spaghetti the next day or extra spaghetti noodles for a stir fry.

Introduction

Today, we are going to talk about something a little more colorful - fruits and vegetables! Summer is the perfect time to focus on increasing your fruit and vegetable intake. Many different fruits and vegetables are in season during the spring/summer and can be less expensive at the grocery store. Summer is also a great time for farmers markets. What are your favorite produce items to buy at the farmers market? How about your favorite fruits or vegetables to buy in the summer at the grocery store?

Allow time for participants to answer. Share what your favorite fruits and vegetables are in the summer.

Most of us know that fruits and vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet, but let's go a little deeper into that. The real key to these foods is the color. Getting a variety of different colors of fruits and vegetables can give you the most bang for your buck!

There is a Senior Farmers Market Program that could be available in your area to participate in. Contact your local area agency on aging. Optional: Facilitators can look up where the nearest Senior Farmers Market Program is for participants.

2

Guide

Facilitators use a guide with behavioral objectives, key nutrition messages, facilitation dialogue, activities, and recipe tasting options. It is expected that the entire guide will be followed.

Three sections, found on the first pages should be used for the Facilitator to prepare for the meeting.

1. Background information includes sources or additional information for the Facilitator to read and become more familiar with the topics discussed.
2. The behavioral goals are meant to give the Facilitator insight on what the participants will know and understand after the meeting.
3. Meeting preparation and props are listed on the first pages.

The Facilitator should take at least 30 minutes to prepare for the meeting by reading the guide, making notes and practicing any games or activities. Additional time will be needed to shop for ingredients and make the recipe for the tasting.

Guide

The guide is written to be conversational and should be followed as a loose script. Facilitators should put the guide in their own words and provide their own examples or commentary when appropriate. To be sure the meetings are interactive the Facilitator should use the prompting questions and examples in the guide to encourage a lively discussion. There are six sections in the guide used to facilitate a group discussion with participants:

1. Conversation
2. Introduction
3. Discussion
4. Physical Activity
5. Tasting Activities
6. Take Action

The **conversation** is meant to remind the participants what was discussed in the last meeting. This is also where participants might reflect on their goal or action step they set last meeting. The next section, the **introduction** will introduce the participants to the meeting topic. The discussion section is usually the longest section, providing a bulk of the information on the topic. The **discussion** section covers the monthly nutrition topic. It also might include a game or activity that the Facilitator should be prepared to execute. The **physical activity** section is a conversation that should educate participants, address barriers and Facilitators, and aid in goal setting. The Facilitator should prepare the recipe for the **tasting activity**. Participants should be provided a sample of the recipe and not meal sized portions. The first option for the tasting activity is the preferred option. The other options may be utilized if the Facilitator can not find the ingredients to the preferred option. The tasting can also be adjusted for cultural relevance. The **take action** section is a place where participants can set an action step or goal to work towards before the next meeting. This might be a smaller step towards a bigger goal or it might be a goal that directly relates to the meeting topic.

Note: these sections might change in order from guide to guide.



Fresh Conversations Material Use Guidelines

Guides and newsletters are available for free on the [Fresh Conversations website](#). Materials are provided in English and starting in January 2021 newsletters are provided in Spanish.

Users of the newsletter and guide cannot make any edits or changes to the newsletter without first contacting the Iowa Department of Public Health **Fresh Conversations** team. This includes adding or removing logos.

If an organization would like to make edits to **Fresh Conversations** newsletters, a material sharing agreement between the Iowa Department of Public Health and the organization is necessary, which includes a signed photo guidelines agreement. Prior to 2021 newsletters and guides were created in InDesign, presently newsletters are created in Canva Pro. Pictures must be purchased from Getty image, Canva Pro or exchanged for pictures owned by the organization.

Below is a list of potential changes an organization could make to the newsletters if there is a material sharing agreement between Iowa Department of Public Health and the organization.

Remove or replace:	Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDPH and Iowa Nutrition Network Logos • Testimonial • Fresh Conversations name or logo • IDPH and SNAP credit statement • Removing information on sources 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
<p>Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mention of Iowa Programs • Recipes • Featured Foods • Pictures • Puzzles • Dates • Content or wording of the newsletter not mentioned above • Color or theme of the newsletter 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>

Note: Revising, adding, or removing content from the **Fresh Conversations** materials may change the constructs of the HBM and make materials non-compliant with its evidence base.



PREPARING FOR FRESH CONVERSATIONS

This section includes information providing facilitator training and how to identify program sites.

Finding Facilitators

Facilitators do not have to have a nutrition background. The most important skill a Facilitator should possess is a welcoming and engaging personality. **Fresh Conversations** Facilitators include both paid and unpaid individuals. Facilitators could be, for example, an unpaid community volunteer, a paid community member, paid personnel of the contractor, paid subcontractors, shared personnel from a community organization, etc.

Facilitators can be recruited in a variety of ways. There might be a champion in an already existing **Fresh Conversations** meeting that would like to become a Facilitator. Facilitators could be employees from shared community spaces such as a librarian, meal site manager or dietitian. Other Facilitators can be found from local colleges and universities, by using local volunteer services or on national volunteer sites.



Training Facilitators

All Facilitators must be trained and maintain satisfactory fidelity assessments. Annually, Facilitators must complete an online Facilitator Training which can be completed self-paced individually or in a group setting. Additionally, if Facilitators are not certified in food safety (e.g. ServSafe), they are required to complete food safety training which can be done individually or in a group setting. Civil Rights training is also required. Training materials can be found on the [IDPH website](#).

Supplemental training should be provided by program managers to new Facilitators and annually to existing Facilitators. Topics include practice using the guide, leading a meeting, displaying a tasting, and special instructions related to the agency.

Identifying Meeting Sites

Fresh Conversations is an older adult program, designed for use with SNAP participants. Meeting sites must be at locations where older adults can gather and where there is evidence of the population having low-incomes (at or below 185% FPL). Historically, the program has been implemented primarily at congregate meal sites and low-income senior housing complexes as these settings are known to have larger populations of older adults with limited incomes.

As the program has evolved to incorporate more equitable practices, **Fresh Conversations** has expanded programming into more community settings, when possible, in order to better meet the needs of participants. There are a number of ways to identify SNAP-Ed eligible community sites, such as using census tract or zip code income data, establishing a set geographical distance from other low-income community resources, or utilizing intake forms to track participant income data. Agencies should work with their community and partners to identify strategic plans to reach some of the most vulnerable populations with limited access to services.

Community Sites to Consider

- Libraries
- Churches or places of worship
- Local hospitals/clinics
- Parks and Recreation facilities
- Senior or community centers





IMPLEMENTING FRESH CONVERSATIONS

This section includes how to conduct a meeting, adapting for inclusiveness, and ensuring program fidelity are found in this part of the guide.

Conducting a Meeting

Participants meet monthly for a 30 to 45-minute interactive meeting led by a trained Facilitator. The program is designed to cover new topics each month, which encourages continuous attendance by participants. For positive health outcomes, the goal is for participants to attend 8 to 9 meetings each calendar year.

Facilitators should arrive 10-15 minutes before the meeting begins and set up any props or supplies needed for the meeting. They should greet participants as they arrive and have them sign in. Meetings should be at minimum 30 minutes and should cover the whole guide as described above. The meeting should start on time.



Throughout the meeting the Facilitator should encourage participant conversation by asking for comments, asking questions and engaging all participants in activities. The Facilitator should answer questions appropriately or if the answer is not known, make a point to get an answer to them by the next meeting. The Facilitator's presentation style should be engaging and professional yet fun, friendly and likeable. The Facilitator should use their own words to communicate meaning and important points. Participation should be encouraged from all meeting attendees, but the Facilitator should have a method to control people who talk too much and encourage those who are reluctant to speak. During the meeting the Facilitator should positively reinforce participants by providing positive feedback or encouragement.

The Facilitator should stick around for at least 5 minutes after the meeting or until participants have left to answer any questions.

Face to Face Meeting Expectations

Meeting locations should be where all participants can easily see and hear the Facilitator and away from any distractions. There should be plenty of seating for all participants and use a circle, u-shape or group formation to encourage discussion. Facilitators should consider using a microphone to lead the meetings, especially for large groups and for participants who may have difficulty hearing.

The program manager or coordinator* should have tried the recipe before the meeting to provide any personal tips or advice about the recipe (e.g., substitutions, where to find ingredients, cost) to Facilitators. At the meeting, the Facilitator should create a visually appealing display for the recipe tasting. Food safety practices during the food demonstration and food sampling activity should be followed (e.g. clean surfaces, utensils, hands, proper temperature, etc.).



*A program manager or coordinator is typically the person who coordinates all the **Fresh Conversations** meetings for the agency. They provide guidance and training about the **Fresh Conversations** program to Facilitators.

Virtual Meeting Suggestions

Virtual meetings, either computer or phone based, can be conducted using the same program materials as the face to face meetings. IDPH provides PowerPoint slides based on the Facilitator guide that can be used for virtual meetings.

Facilitators should ensure that all participants have access to the virtual meeting. This might require time before the meeting to practice getting a participant connected or troubleshooting with an IT administrator. Using a waiting room is discouraged, but if required by the implementing agency, be sure to let participants in early. For the first couple of virtual meetings it is recommended to have a co-host or IT support person ready to assist participants as needed so the main Facilitator can start the meeting on time. It is recommended that agencies implementing **Fresh Conversations** regularly provide technical support and assistance to participants.

Facilitators should have a video or phone conference account without restricted functions (e.g. time limits, not allowing screen sharing, participant size limit, etc.). The Facilitator should keep their camera and microphone on at all times. There should be no noise or distractions in the background. The camera is in a position to see demonstrations or the phone is placed in a place where participants can clearly hear demonstrations.

The Facilitator should provide information at the start of the meeting on participant controls, such as mute/unmute, turn video on/off, and use of the chat box. The Facilitator should encourage participants to keep noise and distractions to a minimum and provide reminders to mute the television or sit in a room away from other noises or distractions.

If the Facilitator is on a computer based meeting, the recipe can be displayed multiple ways. The Facilitator might choose to make a part of the recipe on camera and show the finished product. The Facilitator could create a short (less than 3 minutes) video making the recipe or have pictures of each step of the recipe. Or the Facilitator might use a video provided by a coordinator or program manager they can use to talk over and explain the recipe making process. If the Facilitator is on a phone based meeting, the Facilitator should talk about the recipe without reading it word for word. In both situations, the recipe should provide a discussion. The Facilitator should offer to send a link to the recipe in the chat box or in an email after the meeting to encourage the participants to try it on their own.



Adapting for Inclusiveness

If meeting in-person, agencies should ensure the location of the meeting is equipped for all participants. The location should be American Disability Association (ADA) compliant, see the [ADA website](#) for more details. Examples include, ensuring access to the building with ease from sidewalks and the parking lot. Verifying bathrooms are available for public use and can accommodate older adults. Providing a microphone for large groups or spaces or to accommodate those with hearing impairments.

If meeting virtually, agencies should ensure participants have the opportunity to access the meeting through a computer and/or phone. Agencies should offer technical assistance related to logging on to a **Fresh Conversations** meeting and troubleshooting any technical difficulties that arise. Additionally, the agency should ensure that any services online meet [ADA accessibility guidelines](#). Examples include, providing a service that supports closed captioning and is compatible with screen readers.

Other agencies may modify materials to reflect the needs of the audience (demographic, cultural, social). Agencies might choose to provide different food or physical activity examples other than what is provided in the newsletter. Additionally, agencies may choose to adapt the recipe to be more culturally relevant.

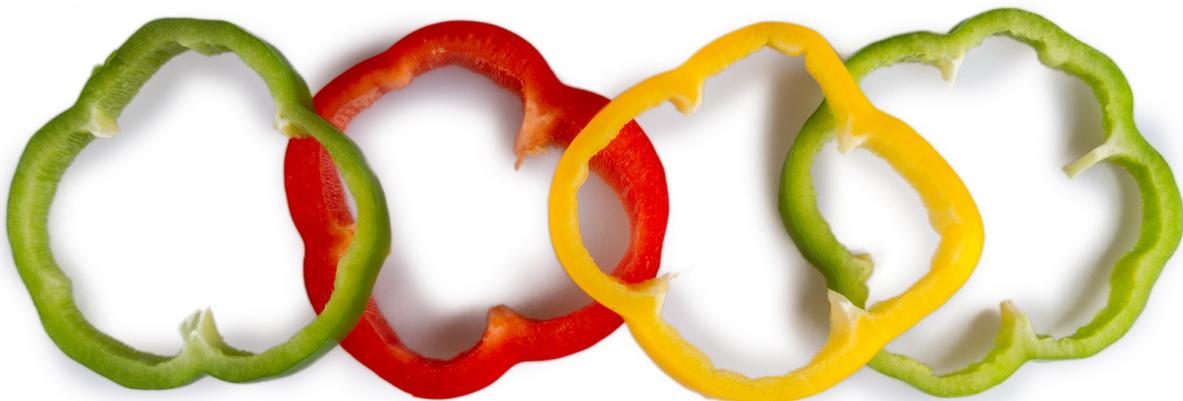


Ensuring Program Fidelity

A fidelity assessment is a process intended to help program implementers determine to what extent the program is being implemented in the manner that it was intended. It can also help identify areas where potential adaptations may be needed. To maintain a high level of fidelity, agencies should use consistent training resources and develop a schedule for training that ensures all new Facilitators are provided with training opportunities before implementing the program. Since Facilitators may have a variety of backgrounds and experience, it is important to assess fidelity often.

Fresh Conversations uses a validated fidelity checklist tool to conduct regular fidelity checks. The Fresh Conversations Fidelity Manual outlines how to use the checklist and provides an overview of the entire process. The checklist can be completed by a program manager or evaluator during the observation of a **Fresh Conversations** meeting. The checklist utilizes an accompanying report form to provide feedback that is intended to be used during a face-to-face meeting with the Facilitator after the observed Fresh Conversations meeting.

It is recommended that new Facilitators have a fidelity check performed within the first four months of delivering the program to ensure that **Fresh Conversations** is being implemented the way it is intended. Additionally, the Iowa Department of Public Health assesses all Facilitators (new and old) every other calendar year to maintain fidelity throughout the program. If a Facilitator scores below a satisfactory level, an improvement plan should be developed that addresses areas of weakness and a second fidelity check and report should be conducted within the following four months.





FUNDING AND BUDGETING

*This section includes costs to consider when implementing **Fresh Conversations**.*

Funding and Budgeting

Fresh Conversations is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education component (SNAP-Ed).

Digital copies of the **Fresh Conversations** newsletters and guides are provided for free from the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Costs to consider for implementation of Fresh Conversations:

- Older adults often prefer printed newsletters instead of digital copies, the newsletters look best printed on higher quality paper in newsletter format. Additionally, many facilitators prefer a printed guide on hand while conducting the meeting.
- If you plan on making any of the approved changes to the newsletter or guide consider an hourly wage to make edits to materials. Also, any picture purchased from Getty Image or a different image source.
- The Fresh Conversations program may need a paid program manager or coordinator in your area.
- Many Fresh Conversations facilitators are volunteers or agency employees. It might be considered to pay facilitators to conduct meetings or reimburse them for food (for the tasting) and/or travel.
- Incentives are often used to entice participants and as a thank you for participating in additional activities. Examples could be items that reinforce educational content such as: meat thermometers, freezer bags, hot pads, spatulas, note pads, pens, exercise bands, etc.
- There are many free ways to market the Fresh Conversations program (see the promotion and marketing section for tips) but a portion of the budget might be considered to market and promote the program.





PROMOTION, MARKETING & BRAND TOOLKIT

*This section includes ways to market the **Fresh Conversations** program and logos, fonts, and colors associated with the program.*



Promotion and Marketing

Get creative! Always look for low or no cost, widespread ways of promoting the program. This helps you to keep your marketing budget low.

- Flyers sent in the mail to prospective participants
- Advertisement with existing agency programming (e.g. cross promotion)
- Inclusion of **Fresh Conversations** marketing on website and social media
- Mention on existing agency and community newsletters, mailings or calendars (e.g. utility bill mailings, community calendars)
- Promotion at community events and community locations that people of all ages gather (e.g. community centers, local Parks and Recreation facilities, libraries, farmers markets, National Night Out etc.)
- Dissemination via word of mouth from existing participants, agency employees
- Promotion through partners (e.g. at local healthcare facilities, local public health, grocery stores, etc.)
- Inclusion in religious affiliated bulletins
- Flyers posted at local businesses or community organizations
- Promotion through area food pantries and Community Action Agencies
- Press releases to area newspapers, radio stations and TV stations
- Promotion of calendar of meetings in local printed newspapers and bulletins

Online Presence

Having an online presence is an essential, and often free, promotional tool for **Fresh Conversations**. Although it may seem as if a lot of older adults aren't online, this is false. Consider creating a separate page on your agency website for **Fresh Conversations** information, including the Fresh Conversations logo, pictures and essential program information. Make sure to keep the page updated. The link to the page can be shared on social media and with local partners to share as well.

Another way to promote **Fresh Conversations** is by including the calendar of meeting in any e-newsletters. Consider asking participants for their emails when they attend meetings to provide reminders and upcoming dates and times.

Social Media Posts

Social media posts are a quick and easy way to advertise **Fresh Conversations**. Many older adults are on Facebook but social media posts can be used to target future participant's children and grandchildren as well. Social media posts should be concise, attention grabbing, and include a picture.

Social Media Advertisement

Paid Facebook ads can be inexpensive (less than \$10) and have the potential to offer a wide reach to targeted demographics. Explore [Facebook's Beginner Guide for Advertisement](#) to consider if this is a good option.

Flyers and Posters

Flyers and posters are a great eye catching advertisement option for **Fresh Conversations**. These tools can be distributed or posted at partner organizations or in the community.

Press Release

The goal of a press release is to send a uniform message highlighting **Fresh Conversations** and detailing the specific information as it pertains to the agency. It should be sent to media outlets such as newspapers, TV stations, and radio programs.

Community Resources

There are additional ways you can promote the **Fresh Conversations** program in the community. Consider tabling at a local area event. Reach out to local coalitions that are centered around older adult health (e.g. Falls Coalition, Senior Advisory Group).

Note: Find examples on the **Fresh Conversations** [website](#).

Logos and Marks



FRESH
CONVERSATIONS

Primary Logo

The primary logo is used in all stand-alone marketing pieces to create consistency.



Alternate Logo

When scale of application does not allow for the full primary logo, the alternate logo may be used instead.

FRESH
CONVERSATIONS

Logotype

When scale of application does not allow for the full primary logo, the logotype may be used instead.

Typography

Aa

Serifa Std 75 Black

Serifa Std 75 Black is used throughout the system as the main headline typeface. When used with the logo, it is shown in all caps. Otherwise it is used in both upper and lower case. If the font is unavailable, Georgia or another serif font may be used instead.

Aa

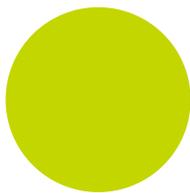
Helveticish

Helveticish is used throughout the system as the body copy. When used with the logo, it is shown in all caps. Otherwise it is used in both upper and lower case. If the font is unavailable, Helvetica or Arial may be used instead.

Fresh Conversations Colors



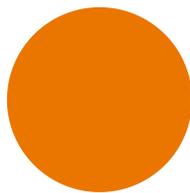
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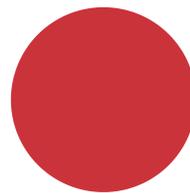
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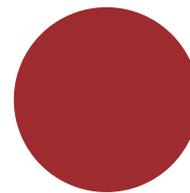
HEX:
FED141



HEX:
EA7600



HEX:
CB333B



HEX:
9E2B2F

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